

Frequently Asked Questions from the Pass the Peaches Please Webinar on February 22, 2012

Question #1: At what age does the recommendation for milk change from whole milk to skim milk and what is the science behind that?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans for 2010 (<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DietaryGuidelines.htm>), which provide guidance for Americans age 2 and older, recommends the following: 1) Focusing on nutrient-dense foods and beverages includes the concepts of eating vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and seafood more often, and 2) eating foods and beverages high in solid fats (major sources of saturated and trans fats), and added sugars less often, and reducing sodium intake. Whole milk and 2% milk contain more saturated fat than low fat (1%) milk and fat free (skim) milk. Higher intakes of saturated fat are associated with higher risk of cardiovascular disease. To decrease the population's intake of saturated fat, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend children ages two and older switch from higher fat milk (whole milk and 2% milk) to low fat (1%) or fat free (skim) milk.

USDA's recent changes to the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program support this recommendation by allowing the service of only low fat and fat free milk (this includes children ages 3-4 years old) within their programs.

I think each situation and child is unique, and based on their eating patterns, growth, and family preferences, I recommend a gradual decrease in milk fat level (at home) starting at age 2 with a switch from whole milk to reduced fat milk (2%), then to low fat milk (1%) by school age.

Child feeding expert, Ellyn Satter (www.ellynsatter.com), takes a different approach which allows for milk at any fat level to be offered and consumed based on a Division of Responsibility in Feeding. <http://www.ellynsatter.com/ellyn-satters-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding-i-80.html>

Regardless of the fat level, it is recommended that young children ages 2-8 consume at least 2 ½ cups of milk per day (or equivalent to with other dairy/calcium-rich foods) to meet their calcium needs. So, it is good practice to serve milk at meal time and milk (or water) at snack time. All milk is nutrient-rich, so always serve milk in a positive manner at meal time.

Question #2: What challenges do you see when families or childcare facilities transition from their current mealtime environments to more of a family-style meal and how can we foster a smooth transition for those facilities wanting to start using this model?

One major challenge is the anticipated mess! Yes, children are messy, but they also love the opportunity to do things for themselves. With small pitchers with lids, and using two hands to pour, most young children (even age 2) can learn to pour their own beverage. The use of small, plastic cups help as well as the expectation that they pour ½ a cup at a time (so, if they do spill it is less.) Children

can also learn to clean up after themselves, whether it is wiping up spilled milk with a paper towel (keep rolls of paper towels readily available in the dining areas) and scraping their plates into the garbage and then taking their plates to the sink.

Another option is to start family style meals with one meal component at a time. Start with pouring milk. Once that is mastered, allow them to self-serve their fruit and vegetables. Then, self-serve their bread/grains. Lastly, let them self-serve the entrée. Young children learn really fast. This method works best with an adult sitting with children to help them as needed. It is always helpful to visit a program with a positive family style meal service to see firsthand how it works.

Children can participate in family style meals from birth by being close to the table at meal time, sitting in a high chair at the table at meal time, eating some of the same foods as age-appropriate, moving from high chair to booster chair, and so forth. Lenita Hough, home provider in *Pass the Peaches Please* DVD, provides great tips on how babies, toddlers, and preschoolers participate in family style meals in her childcare program.

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/MTTeam.html#gpm1_7

Another challenge: it may take the staff more time to set the table family style (rather than pre-plated service) and more dishes to wash. Transition idea: Have the children help set the table and clear the table. It may create 3-4 more serving bowls to wash; but keep the benefits in mind:

- Children like to serve themselves.
 - Children learn to become competent eaters; they also learn life-long meal time skills (which they may not be learning at home).
 - Children will waste less food and will eat better.
 - Children can try new foods at their own pace.
 - Provides an environment of trust—Adults trust children to serve themselves and eat from what they put on their plate and children trust adults to prepare the food and not pressure them to eat.
- <http://www.ellynsatter.com/ellyn-satters-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding-i-80.html>

Question #3: Where do we go to obtain the attendance certificate?

An attendance certificate is provided at this Web site:

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/MTTeam.html#gpm1_7

Question #4: Will we be able to open this PowerPoint file for the rest of our staff to view?

The PowerPoint file used in the live webinar will be posted to this Web site:

http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/MTTeam.html#gpm1_7